

Curriculum Body

Annex G- Market impact assessment

October 2022

Contents

The scope of this intervention	3
The supply of curriculum resources	4
Overview of commercial curriculum resources market	6
Use and perceptions of the curriculum resources market	8
Market impact	11
Information from the market	11
Submissions from BESA and PA	11
Survey	13
DfE assessment	13
Further considerations by market segment	15
Traditional publishers	15
Digital platformers and online repositories	15
Single subject specialists; school to school	16

The scope of this intervention

There are a wide range of products and services offered by the private market or developed by teachers themselves to support the effective design and delivery of the curriculum. For the purposes of this analysis, it is helpful to categorise these into the following three segments: 1) curriculum resources (digital and print), 2) teaching and learning support applications and software, 3) continuous professional development (CPD). There is some overlap between 1) and 2), but broadly, 1) refers to traditional static, non-interactive curriculum resources and 2) to technologies with some higher functionality, such as Management Information Systems or interactive learning tools such as [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

The Curriculum Body (CB) is proposed to provide free, complete sets of curriculum resources, covering the National Curriculum KS1-4, via a digital platform. On this basis its activities will fall largely into segment 1. The CB will not offer long form subject specific CPD and therefore will have minimal overlap with segment 3. In terms of segment 2 there will consciously only be limited overlap in so far as it enables effective use of the resources by users in support of the CB's aims. For example CB will not create Management Information Systems.

The supply of curriculum resources

The supply of curriculum resources in general in England falls into two main categories: those supplied commercially (i.e. the commercial curriculum resources market), and those created by teachers for themselves and/or shared with fellow teachers within the same school or MAT. There is a third category of publicly funded or non-profit resources, such as BBC Bitesize or free DfE-funded resources – most notably of course existing resources provided by Oak.

It is difficult to quantify the commercial curriculum resources market precisely, but we can roughly estimate this to be worth between £200-300m p/a. We can use 2022 data from BESA on average school spend on relevant categories of learning resources to come to a figure of [REDACTED]. In their 2022 submission of information to inform this analysis, BESA estimated the UK digital content market is valued at approximately [REDACTED]. If we add this figure to the 2020 PA data on total UK domestic sales of printed schoolbooks - [REDACTED]— we get another possible total figure of [REDACTED]. A bottom-up analysis of the learning resources' market conducted in December 2019 totalled the revenues of the leading players in each market segment to come to a rough estimate of [REDACTED].

There is evidence to suggest that commercially supplied resources make up a significantly smaller proportion of resources used by teachers than self or school-created ones. A 2021 study commissioned by the Publishers' Association (PA) found that "22% of teachers use[d] mostly paid resources, with 37% using an even mixture of resources that are paid-for and created by themselves, with 38% mostly using their own / ones their school has created." As a rough, purely illustrative calculation, if we have the 22%/38% as using only paid/own resources rather than 'mostly', and the 37% as using exactly half of each, and we take the value of the commercial market as £300m, the equivalent 'commercial value' of the self/school-created resources market could be estimated at around £420m p/a.

We expect it is this large industry of self or school-created resources that will first be displaced by this intervention. While nominally free, this is of course ultimately funded by the taxpayer via the public funding that pays for the teacher-time that is consumed in creating the resources. We have data that using textbooks could save a teacher on

¹[REDACTED].

² Toochors por

² Teachers-perceptions-of-physical-digital-and-online-resources-and-the-impact-of-Covid-19.pdf (publicfirst.co.uk) p16

 $^{^3}$ 22% + 37/2% (% use of commercial resources) = £300,000,000. Therefore 38% + 37/2% (% use of own/school resources) = £418,518,519. This calculation does not account for use of public funded resources.

average 1.6hrs a week in lesson planning (as a conservative estimate).⁴ To make another rough illustrative calculation, if we make use of paid resources equivalent to use of textbooks, and again assume that the 37% who use a mixture of paid-for and self-created resources use half of each, then that would mean that self or school-created resources cost the Government – very roughly – £550m p/a.⁵

_

⁴ 'Publishing's contribution to school education', Frontier Economics, 2018 (publishers.org.uk) p12

 $^{^5}$ 365,856 (number of teachers in scope) x £43.04 (cost of a teacher per hour) x 39 (weeks teacher work a year) x 1.6 (hours saved a week if they were using paid for resources) x (38% (teachers who don't use paid for resources + 37%/2 (teachers using half paid-for resources)) = £555,157,000

Overview of commercial curriculum resources market

The commercial resources market consists of the following main types of supplier: traditional publishers; digital platformers; single subject specialists; and school-to-school.

The focus of the traditional publishers is on digital and printed schoolbooks. These resources are generally high quality. In terms of market value, these suppliers dominate the market: according to data from the Publishers' Association (PA), the domestic schoolbooks market was worth [REDACTED] in 2019/20. However, this marked a [REDACTED] from 2016 which indicates this may be [REDACTED]. A large proportion of publishers' revenues in schoolbooks come from exports abroad: according to PA data, export sales value of schoolbooks was [REDACTED] in 2020 (compared to [REDACTED] for home sales). This represented a [REDACTED] in export sales – in 2019 the figure was [REDACTED] almost on a par with home sales of [REDACTED]. It is likely a large proportion of revenues for these suppliers is in the GCSE and A-Level years (KS4-5).

The second biggest segment of the market in terms of value are digital platformers and online repositories such as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. While some of the resources available via these platforms are of high quality, this segment presents the greatest concerns around quality because of the less rigorous quality assurance process the resources generally undergo, and also because these repositories make individual lessons available, whereas effective curriculum is carefully sequenced over a number of lessons. 6 HM Chief Inspector warned recently about the danger of 'pick and mixing'7 between curricula undermining quality of education, and these repositories may facilitate these unhelpful behaviours. Although the least reliable in terms of quality, this segment seems to have the highest usage among teachers: e.g., the Policy Exchange think tank in 2018 asked teachers what sort of material they used to help them in curriculum planning and lesson resourcing, they found "by far the most common response [was] online resource banks, collating teacher-produced work". 8 A high level 2019 bottom-up analysis conducted by the Cabinet Office estimated the size of this segment at the time as roughly [REDACTED]. It is likely larger now, as it appears this is a fast-growing segment of the market: [REDACTED], increased its revenues by [REDACTED] between 2018 and 2019. Reducing 'pick and mix' use of lower quality materials from these sources is another target of this intervention, alongside the industry of self or school created resources.

•

⁶ Completing-the-Revolution.pdf (policyexchange.org.uk) p7, p27.

⁷ Amanda Spielman's speech at the 2022 Schools and Academies Show - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁸ Completing-the-Revolution.pdf (policyexchange.org.uk) p27

^{9 [}REDACTED]

The smallest two segments are the single subject specialists, such as [REDACTED], and School-to-School providers such as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. These products are generally rigorous and high quality. We know that a significant portion of revenues for many of these suppliers are their CPD programmes based around their products. The 2019 Cabinet Office bottom-up analysis estimated the size of these segments together at around [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]. The dominance of English KS1-2 is very likely down to phonics, which the CB will not provide. This data applies only to publishers' revenues. BESA has provided data on the subjects that are 'likely to become a spending focus' for schools. [REDACTED]. While the market has not provided data for this, we know that KS5 is a large lucrative market, which the CB will not provide.

Use and perceptions of the curriculum resources market

It is clear that the most significant factor driving the dominance of self or school-created resources or online repositories as sources of resources is the fact that teachers are encultured to plan lessons from scratch and/or pick and mix resources from a variety of sources, driven by a sense of professional autonomy.

2021 Public First research found "The largest barrier to extensive textbook (physical or digital) or complete curriculum resources use felt by teachers is the need for differentiation and professional autonomy." ¹⁰ It also found that "Most teachers see themselves as content curators – cherry-picking the best resources for each lesson and each student." ¹¹ The 2018 CooperGibson research found that "Most respondents in both primary and secondary schools felt strongly that curriculum resources needed to be adaptable. Teachers brought together different resources and tailored them to their teaching style and to suit the varied needs of pupils, or the context of the school and local area." ¹² It also found that "Overall, it was generally accepted that a range of resources, formats and approaches were required to be used in tandem (rather than teachers depending on one type/format) to ensure that curriculum delivery was high quality and met the teaching styles of staff and needs of pupils." ¹³

Oak's own survey data bears out the prevalence of this behaviour. Oak's survey with 624 teachers (Oak users and non-users alike) in March 2022 found that when asked about the usage of [REDACTED] and Oak, only 0.3% of teachers (2 teachers in the sample) said that they exclusively use Oak. This is notable as, although Oak does not currently provide the quality and the full breadth of resources it is proposed to do in the future, it does provide near to full sets of resources with curriculum maps, lesson slides and video lessons.

The 2021 Public First research found that budgetary concerns did not seem to be a significant factor in driving use of self-created or cheap online resources. He but a perception of tightening school budgets post pandemic may mean this becomes a greater factor going forwards. Oak research in 2022 asked over 5,000 teachers in the 21/22 academic year, what kind of resources were hardest to find online. 51% said free or affordable; 37% said high quality and evidence based; 31% said sequenced into a full

¹⁰ Teachers-perceptions-of-physical-digital-and-online-resources-and-the-impact-of-Covid-19.pdf (publicfirst.co.uk) p24

¹¹ Ibid p28

¹² Use and perceptions of curriculum support resources in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk) pp56-7

¹³ Ibid p62

¹⁴ <u>Teachers-perceptions-of-physical-digital-and-online-resources-and-the-impact-of-Covid-19.pdf</u> (publicfirst.co.uk) e.g. "[Teachers] largely have the budget to buy textbooks if they wish." P10

scheme of work and 30% said adaptable. It also asked how budgetary constraints had affected teachers personally. 61% of primary school teachers and 44% of secondary school teachers said their budget to buy resources was now smaller (the most popular answer overall).

In addition to this, Government plans for greater academisation, which will give more schools access to internal MAT curriculum resources, are likely to further decrease reliance on higher value curriculum resources in future.

Teachers themselves seem concerned with the quality of resources they find by searching online. The 2018 CooperGibson research found¹⁵ for example: "Whilst most respondents felt that there were a lot of resources available, many had concerns about their quality;" and "Respondents generally felt it was easier to make resources themselves rather than spend an excessive amount of time searching online for resources and then finding that they still had to tailor them to the needs of their pupils". The Oak 2022 research quoted above found that for 68% of teachers surveyed resources that were either high quality and evidence based or sequenced into a full scheme of work were hardest to find online. It also found 59% of respondents (the most popular answer) said access to high quality curriculum exemplars would help them develop and improve their curriculum.

And overall, teachers seem to be feeling less and less well-equipped with teaching and learning resources. BESA 2022 data (not publicly available) on schools and teaching and learning resources shows a strong downward trend in the proportion of schools believing they are well-equipped with teaching and learning resources. In 2016 [REDACTED] of secondary schools and [REDACTED] primary schools felt ill-equipped with teaching and learning resources, and by 2020 just under [REDACTED] of secondary schools and almost [REDACTED] of primary schools felt ill-equipped (in 2022 this is over [REDACTED] of secondary schools and around [REDACTED] of primary schools). This is not readily explainable by budgetary constraints: school spend on classroom resource has in fact broadly increased in this period, though a dip of spending in secondary schools for 2022 has followed a sharp spike in 2021. The Teacher Tapp data commissioned by Oak referenced above, showing that many teachers are finding it hard to find free high quality resources online is further evidence that teachers needs are not currently being met.

The picture we get overall is of a market with little natural growth prospects for high value high quality resources, largely as a result of embedded teacher planning behaviours, with a perception of tightening school budgets post pandemic as potentially an exacerbating

¹⁵ Use and perceptions of curriculum support resources in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)

¹⁶ BESA Education Expenditure – Resources in English Maintained Schools – Issue 28 p24

¹⁷ BESA Education Expenditure – Resources in English Maintained Schools – Issue 28 p44

factor going forward. Teachers themselves appear to be dissatisfied with the market offer. Without Government intervention, there is no obvious route for the overall quality of materials teachers are sourcing externally to improve.

Market impact

Information from the market

Submissions from BESA and PA

We have engaged with British Education Suppliers' Association (BESA) and the Publishers' Association (PA), the trade bodies representing the relevant commercial suppliers, to understand better their assessment of the potential market impact of our proposed model. In doing this we presented the decisions in principle set out in the submission of 12 May as well as a range of further policy choices we could take which we believe will mitigate negative market impact. We asked market representatives to assume that these decisions were all taken and market mitigations applied and give a view on potential impact.

Both organisations supported our ambitious aims. However, the information they have submitted in response sets out a clear view that this intervention will have a significant negative impact on the commercial market. BESA have attempted to quantify the impact as being between 10% and 'upwards of 30%' – as set out below, we would dispute the basis of the 10% and the grounds for the 30% figure are unclear. As set out below, PA have not attempted to quantify the impact, but have provided figures for a similar (cancelled) previous DfE initiative – though no basis for these figures is given. We believe the information they have submitted provides some evidence of an impact on the market, but not for the level of impact they are suggesting. A summary of their arguments and evidence, and our analysis is set out below.

The main impact they cite is that schools/teachers will reduce their spending on commercial resources once CB's resources are available. BESA/PA say that even if teachers would prefer to use commercial resources to CB's, these will likely still lose out because firstly, BESA and PA are concerned that CB resources will be seen as having been endorsed by Ofsted (or that DfE will in time move in this direction); and secondly CB's resources will be free and school managers will struggle to justify spending on materials from the commercial market. The reduction of suppliers' revenues this will cause will reduce their ability to keep investing in their resources, depleting quality over time. They say it will also make it more difficult for new players to operate within the sector, which would likely result in the market being dominated by a few large organisations, stifling competition and innovation.

BESA cite the example of Poland as supporting evidence specifically in respect of the digital publishing market. They say before 2014 all textbooks were produced by educational publishers, without direct support from the state; and from 2014 schools were strongly encouraged to avoid commercial publications and instead choose the ministry's free-to-use digital textbook platform. According to the 2016 article they cite, for primary schools 97% use the textbooks created under the Government. The policy led to a 10%

contraction in the textbook sector in the first year and may have shrunk by a further 6 to 8% in 2015. 18 This is an interesting precedent, but importantly, unlike the Poland example, CB's resources will be entirely optional and schools will not be encouraged to use them over other high quality materials. It appears there is also stronger prevalence of textbook use in Poland compared to the UK, and therefore the Polish government's resources would have been a direct substitute for a larger portion of the supply of curriculum resources. As teachers will not be writing their own textbooks, use of the Polish government's resources would also necessarily be displacing commercial resources, rather than teacher-created resources – unlike with the CB. Therefore we would expect impact of the CB to be lower than the impact in Poland, and certainly not, as BESA suggest that, it could be higher – "30% or upwards" in a worst case scenario because of the added factor of budgetary constraints and higher operating costs for suppliers as a result of the worsening economic situations. They provide no basis for this 30% figure.

BESA also point to an (uncited) 2022 BESA survey which found that "[REDACTED]." This does point to CB having some impact, but as the meaning of 'downgrade' is not quantified, the scale of impact it points to cannot be determined.

PA share projections developed by the main educational publishers in the UK in 2021 of the impact of DfE's previous "Curriculum Fund proposals' (we assume this is referring to the cancelled in-class resources procurement) would have on their revenues in English, Maths and Science KS1-3. They estimated a total impact of [REDACTED]. No supporting evidence is provided for the data so its quality or applicability cannot be analysed.

BESA also argue that in terms of digital content and Ed Tech suppliers, the existence of CB's free resources will deter future investment and quote a CEO of an investment firm specialising in digital small businesses/start ups to that effect. They say this would therefore weaken a dynamic sector which grew by [REDACTED] during the height of the pandemic, and which attracts [REDACTED]investment in Europe in the sector spent in the UK.¹⁹

PA also warn that any de facto 'kite marking' of CB's products will drive a wedge between those products and the other commercial products and further deter spending on those products. It is important to note here that we are planning for CB to signpost to some other high quality commercial products. They also argue that CB's procurement process will cause suppliers to divert resources away from core activities to submit bids, which

_

¹⁸ Poland's Publishers, Politicians Struggle With TextBook Policies (publishingperspectives.com)

¹⁹ Robert Walters; Vacancysoft, "EdTech: The Hyper Accelerator," 2021. [Online]. Available: https://www.robertwalters.co.uk/

"will be wasted for the majority" which do not succeed. They suggest this and the associated uncertainty will cause problems for [REDACTED]

BESA also stress that while educational exports are important, and therefore said that restrictions of the international operation of CB would be an important mitigation, "[REDACTED]". The figures they provide are that "[REDACTED] of companies generate [REDACTED] of their revenue through exports, whilst [REDACTED] generate [REDACTED] of their revenue." They do not specify what proportion revenue is exports for the remaining [REDACTED] of companies, but we can infer it is between [REDACTED]. They also do not specify the relative sizes of these companies so it is not possible to determine what proportion of total revenues come from exports.

Both BESA and PA point out how school spending and market provision for Science, English and Maths are significantly higher than other subjects. BESA suggest that for CB to focus on the smaller subjects would significantly reduce its impact on the market, while also addressing a greater market need; [REDACTED].

Survey

We also conducted an informal survey of commercial providers who attended introductory webinars in early July on proposals for what the CB will do. We received 43 responses in total. One of the questions asked was whether they thought the CB would negatively impact their business. The vast majority said it would, citing similar concerns to those raised by BESA/PA: mainly that schools would reduce spend on paid-for resources if free Government-backed resources were available which would also reduce investment and innovation. The survey also asked about the proposed breadth of resources, the priority subjects, signposting alternative providers, and how the CB should collaborate with stakeholders. The most common responses to these questions indicated the proposed scope of resources was too broad; that the proposed subjects were already supported with enough provision; that signposting to only a few providers would limit the market; and stressed the importance of working with a range of stakeholders.

DfE assessment

Commercial providers have provided a clear and consistent view that they believe the CB will have a significant negative impact on their business and that this outweighs any potential opportunities. We agree there is a theoretical case that the CB could have some negative impact on the commercial market for curriculum resources, but also believe that the impact is likely to be lower than that suggested by the market, which has not been able to provide robust evidence for its position, particularly as its views appear to be based on a number of assumptions that we do not believe are correct. For example, the market does not appear to have taken into account the fact that Oak has existed since 2020 and does not seem to have significantly disrupted the market despite providing

broadly the same offer as the CB will. The market appears to be making the following assumptions in their feedback to us:

- The effect of the CB will be drastically different to that of Oak (despite the scope of the resources not broadening significantly)
- Use of CB's resources necessarily means reduced use of commercial resources
- CB will have a significant impact across the commercial market, even on areas its
 offer will not cover
- The effect of the CB will be significantly different to that of previous comparable initiatives such as BBC Bitesize or the National Strategies.
- The CB's active measures to support the market will have little impact

Taking assumptions in turn, most importantly Oak of course already exists, and has done so since 2020, and provides broadly the same scope of resources as the CB. We are not aware that Oak has caused disruption to the market, and the market has not provided us with evidence to show otherwise. Indeed, in terms of the digital platformers/online repositories, their usage and revenues have grown. This does come with important caveat that the pandemic, remote learning, and Government interventions such as laptop schemes may have offset and therefore obscured such an impact. However, it is strong grounds for believing the market impact will not be as significant as the market suggests.

There is not a zero-sum relationship between teachers using CB's resources and commercial resources. This is firstly because as outlined above, it is likely that the majority of resources teachers use are not provided commercially, but are rather self or school created. Our intention is that a large proportion of CB usage will replace the time teachers are currently spending planning lessons from scratch or creating their own resources. Secondly, as set out above, teachers tend not to use a set of resources exclusively, with differentiation and professional autonomy the key concerns driving this. An informal survey conducted in July 2022 on mainly teachers/school leaders following market engagement webinars on the proposed role of the CB found that out of 43 respondents, only 1 said they would use CB's resources exclusively. BESA's own data bears this out, which suggests that [REDACTED] (Primary) and [REDACTED] (Secondary) schools expect the provision of free resources to have any impact on their spending on resources. This is also borne out by current Oak data which found that 0.3% of Oak users use Oak exclusively.

The CB's offer will not overlap with all of the commercial curriculum resources market. As set out above, it will only have limited overlap with the Ed Tech market; it will not offer long form subject specific CPD; it will not offer in the lucrative KS5 market or the large phonics market. It will also not provide the extended reading on topics that many textbooks contain or consist of. As a digital resource it will also not provide physical resources, which in 2020 was still 81% of schoolbooks sales – so where schools require physical resources the CB should not infringe on this. Also there a great deal of plurality in the content of the taught curriculum that CB cannot possibly cover: e.g. every Shakespeare tragedy or all the different history periods a KS3 class might take. So even

in the subjects/key-stages it provides resources it will not actually be covering the full scope of the market.

The Government, or public sector, has provided free and comprehensive curriculum resources before in the form of BBC Bitesize launched in 1998 and the resources provided as part of National Strategies which also launched in 1998. These interventions did not cause the commercial market to fail, and the market has not suggested or provided evidence that they had a significant impact.

CB will take active measures to support the commercial market. Firstly, it will itself be procuring from the market, channelling funding to a number of providers across the system. It is planned that commercial suppliers will be able to bid in for their own curriculum sequences to be featured on the CB's platform, which would then signpost to the underlying lesson materials to which users could purchase access as required. This should promote and support demand for high-quality offerings from the commercial market. CB will continue to identify and consider opportunities for organisations to align their products and features with, and enrich, the ALB's resources in ways that support wider market growth. CB should be modelling what excellent resources look like, shifting consumers to be more informed and therefore supporting the high quality parts of the market over the less high quality, particularly online repositories. CB will also share research and development from their work with the market to support development of their own products.

Further considerations by market segment

Traditional publishers

The CB will not be actively marketing its resources abroad, and therefore will not infringe in this way on export sales of commercial suppliers, which we know, as set out above, represents a substantial portion of revenue for these suppliers – it was around half prepandemic. As set out above, CB will not offer printed resources or long-form reading which many textbooks contain or consist of. In the longer term, publishers may choose to align such schoolbooks to supplement the CB's resources and publishers are already proactively approaching Oak about this. The CB will also not provide CPD, which we know is an important element of publishers' revenues - according to PA data they have delivered over [REDACTED] sessions for teachers in the last three years – and will not provide formal assessment or qualifications which is also a significant market.

Digital platformers and online repositories

One of the intentions of this intervention is to displace use of lower quality materials from these suppliers. While 'pick and mix' planning behaviours may be ingrained and widespread, it is hoped that by making CB's resources free, adaptable, comprehensive, and accessible via a user friendly digital platform, teachers may reduce use of lower

quality materials from online repositories in favour of CB. Therefore some disruption to this element of the market is both expected and intended. However, the growth of use of these repositories between 2020-present while Oak has been in existence, while not evidence of complete lack of impact given the pandemic context, does indicate that there is unlikely to be a significant immediate effect on these suppliers.

Single subject specialists; school to school

Where these suppliers specialise in online complete curriculum programmes in subjects the CB will cover, they are most at risk of being impacted, as prospective customers will be able to access a high-quality complete curriculum programme via the CB for free. However, these providers, as specialists in complete curriculum programmes, are well placed to win contracts for the Curriculum Body's procurement which relative to the size of these suppliers and this market would be a significant funding stream. We also know most of these suppliers generate a large portion of their revenue from their CPD offer that is based on their resources and the CB will not provide CPD. While presumably CPD sales are linked to sales of their resources, these suppliers can align their CPD offering and potentially also their resources with the CB resources. Any supplier that wins in the CB's procurement and become an official partner, should also significantly increase their CPD revenues.



© Crown copyright 2022

This publication (not including logos) is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

To view this licence:

visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

About this publication:

enquiries <u>www.education.gov.uk/contactus</u> download <u>www.gov.uk/government/publications</u>



Follow us on Twitter: @educationgovuk



Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/educationgovuk